



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

The Heart of Missions: May 2015

Notes from Kristi

Kristi Corbin, Missions Coordinator

I apologize for the lateness of the publication this time due to some unexpected circumstances. Also, last month's Heart of Missions was not printed and available in the sanctuary or the Welcome Desk in a timely manner due to some difficulties with technology at the time. I am working to fix the fixable problems related to these situations so that I can provide both earlier publication times and timely printed copies in the future. Thank you for your patience.

Please note the following news items:

- 1. I am now able to make updates to the Missions section of the website. I have reviewed all sections and made minor changes based on fixing broken links, updating current events or in making the site a bit more user-friendly and "cleaned up." Please take a few minutes and review sections with which you are involved and provide any recommendations for content by submitting such content to me at my email address.*
- 2. If you are interested in spearheading a new missions project, you might be interested in the application process for accessing a portion of the Forward 150 Mission Fund. Project proposals can take several forms. One form would be projects addressing the root causes of poverty, with particular attention to women, children, and education, consistent with PCUSA Mission Agency goals. A second form would be projects educating the congregation and broader community about such issues specifically to shape future endeavors related to the eradication of poverty. A final form would be projects that create more enthusiasm for, and participation in, mission endeavors at our church. If you are interested in applying for funds for your project, email me and I will send you the application form and instructions.*
- 3. We are currently searching for applicants for the ESL Coordinator Position. The job description is available on the website at firstchurchchampaign.org/employment-opportunities. Applications are still being accepted through at least **May 8**.*

[Chances for Prayer]

For the ESL Coordinator Search

For our members on the Mission Possible Trip between May 17 and May 23

For the upcoming Raindrop Project for a structure at Jesus is the Way Ministries

For the projects being developed via funding from Forward 150 Mission Fund

In Christ, Kristi

Austin's Place

By Sandy Carr

Many of you are already familiar with Austin's Place because you have volunteered as a driver, overnight host, or laundry person. Maybe you contributed snacks or drinks or money to purchase them. Perhaps you were a prayer partner for this mission.

When United Way approached local churches with the idea of providing emergency shelter for homeless women, our neighbors, the First United Methodist Church, stepped out on faith and said they could provide the space but needed help. As they made plans to open for the winter months, many members of our congregation helped in various areas. The only paid people in this program are staffers at Courage Connection who do the intake screening of potential guests each night. For several years this cost was covered by grants--other years with donations.

For eight years, Austin's Place has provided a safe, warm place for homeless women to spend the night. Each night, during December through March, women seeking shelter must report to Courage Connection before 7:30 p.m. For screening. At 8:00p.m. a volunteer driver transports the guests from Courage Connection to the church where two volunteers are waiting greet them, get them supplied with bedding, chat with them if it is welcome, and prepare for a restful night.

In the morning at 7:00a.m. a driver returns and transports the guests to the bus terminal or the TIMES center where they can have breakfast and a shower. Each woman is also given 2 bus tokens if needed. Once or twice a week a volunteer picks up bedding for laundering. Every week or two volunteers shop for juice boxes, bottled water, granola bars, fruit, and other snacks. Personal hygiene items are often donated and new socks are in high demand. As you might imagine, the scheduling for each night can be quite time consuming. Flexibility is a core attribute for anyone working with a volunteer base!

Training sessions are provided several times during the season for new volunteer recruits. Austin's Place strives for sensitive, hospitable treatment of the guests.

Although the space approved at the Methodist Church is for just 8 overnight guests, at least that much is available on a cold winter night until a permanent shelter for women is a reality in this community.

Please prayerfully consider if this is a mission you could support. If you have questions, please speak with church members Sandy Carr or Barb Fuller-Curry. You could also speak with Pastor Cathy Minor at FUMC at cminor@champaignfumc.org or by calling 356-9078.

A Courageous Conversation

By: Sarah Laughenberg, Outreach

First Presbyterian Church is pleased to announce the return of a popular speaker for a Courageous Conversation series on the Qur'an. Michael Chrzastowski, PhD, will begin a five-part series called Gaining a Christian Understanding of the Qur'an on Tuesday, May 19 from 7-8:30 PM in the sanctuary. The remaining sessions will take place on Sunday mornings from 11:45-1:15 on May 24 and June 7, 14, and 21.

This Courageous Conversation series will discuss why reading the Qur'an can be challenging for Christians due to structural and contextual variations from the Bible. Dr. Chrzastowski will discuss what the scripture of Islam says about Jesus and the nature of God. In addition, the series will examine how some misguided readers of the Qur'an could erroneously interpret a message of violence.

Please spread the word about this exciting community event- all are welcome! We hope to see you May 19 for a Courageous Conversation about the Qur'an.

In ESL classes, there are so many times when we English speakers are challenged to clarify words and have reason to pause as we consider some of the strange ways of the English language.

Consider, for example, the day a tutor encountered this question in the midst of a series of lessons about rooms of the house and home maintenance and repairs: "Teacher, what is the difference between the exterminator and the Terminator?" We all chuckle over such wonderful, culture-rich moments.

—Jan Sabey, ESL Coordinator

— Transportation Corps —

As many as fifty people request transportation to worship with us each weekend.

You are invited to join this list of those able to serve from time to time:
Bill and Clemmie Ackermann, Ken and Kena Chapman, Miriam Chenault, Greg Cozad, Chip and Ruth Craddock, Judy Gamble, Katharine Jones, Bob and Claudia Kirby, César and Mamiley Mnyampara, John Muirhead, Fiston and Niclette Niambi, Gary and Linda Peterson, Kurt and Lola Ruthsmandorfer, Mark and Kathy Schoeffmann, Jeffrey Smith, Vern Snoeyink, Rick and Mary Ann Snyder.

